

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE MAYOR AND COMMITTEE OF THE  
TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE, HELD AT THE WANTAGE TOWNSHIP BUILDING, 888 STATE  
ROUTE 23, WANTAGE NJ, HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON  
DECEMBER 8, 2016.**

Mayor Bassani called the meeting to order, and requested that the Clerk call the roll. Upon roll call, the following members of the governing body were present: Mayor Ronald Bassani, Committeeman Jon Morris, and Committeeman William Gaechter. Also present: Administrator/Acting Clerk Debra Millikin, Deputy Clerk Christine M. Von Oesen, Attorney Glenn Kienz.

Mayor Bassani stated, "This meeting is being held in compliance with the provisions of the Open Public Meeting Act, P.L. 1975, Chapter 231. It has been properly noticed and certified by the Clerk."

Mayor Bassani invited all those in attendance to join in the Salute to the Flag.

Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to Approve the Consent Agenda.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Bassani requested that the governing body review the Consent Agenda.

**RESOLUTIONS (Approval for the following actions):**

1. A Motion is in order to approve the December 2016 Bill List with the exception of Bassani Power Equipment LLC PO# for Files and Chain Loop (DPW) in the amount of \$37.83 and with the exception of Bassani Power Equipment PO#13939 for EMC Generator in the amount of \$3,800.00 and with the exception of Eye On Wireless PO #13922 for Case and Charger for new phone in the amount of \$84.97.

2. **REPORTS (Approval for Filing the Following)**

- Municipal Clerk Report for November 2016
- Registrar Report for November 2016
- Tax Collector Report for November 2016
- Board of Health Report for November 2016
- Land Use Board Report for November 2016
- Housing Report for November 2016
- Zoning Report for November 2016
- Driveway Report for November 2016
- Property Maintenance November 2016

3. A Motion is in Order to approve a RESOLUTION AWARDING QUOTES FOR SNOW PLOWING, SANDING & SALTING ON VARIOUS ROADS WITHIN WANTAGE TOWNSHIP to Erik Enterprise Landscaping, LLC at the hourly rate of \$120.00 per hour.

4. A Motion is in Order to approve a RESOLUTION AWARDING CONTRACT FOR ROCK SALT THROUGH COUNTY OF SUSSEX CO-OP in the amount of \$58.72 per ton via Cargill, Inc., from North Olmsted, Ohio.

5. A Motion is in Order to approve a RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A 5 YEAR AGREEMENT BETWEEN WANTAGE TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT AND SUSSEX FIRE DEPARTMENT INC. FOR MUTUAL AID.

6. A Motion is in order to approve a RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A SHARED SERVICE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TOWNSHIP OF WANTAGE AND THE BOROUGH OF SUSSEX FOR TAX COLLECTION SERVICES.

7. A Motion is in Order to approve a RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A 5 YEAR AGREEMENT BETWEEN WANTAGE TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT AND UNIONVILLE VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT (MINISINK HOSE COMPANY) FOR MUTUAL AID.

8. A Motion is in order to approve the Certificate of Determination and Award certified by Wantage Township Chief Financial Officer Michelle LaStarza, issued as a \$5,280,082 Bond Anticipation Note, awarded and sold to TD Bank, N.A., Mount Laurel, New Jersey.

9. A Motion is in Order to approve an Application for Blue Light Permit for Wantage Township Volunteer Fire Fighter Edward Litterio.

10. A Motion is in order to authorize Change Order #1 to the contract entitled "Milling and Paving Pidgeon Hill Road – Section IV," representing a contract reduction in the amount of \$18,731.00, as per recommendation of Township Engineer Harold Pellow.

11. A Motion is in order to authorize Change Order #1 "Proposed Reclamation Reconstruction & Paving of Havens Road Section 1 and Dunvale Road "representing an increase in the amount of \$5,240.30, as per recommendation of Township Engineer Harold Pellow.

12. A Motion is in Order to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2016 Wantage Township Mayor and Committee meeting.

13. A Motion is in Order to approve Overpayment Refunds to 565 Land Development, Block 117 Lot 38.01 for tax overpayment in the amount of \$4,859.28, and to Kevin Depouli, Block 23 Lot 9.02, for tax overpayment in the amount of \$5.20.

14. A Motion is in Order to approve a reimbursement for a completed escrow deposit of \$2,500.00 to Dover Contracting for Block 14 Lot 15.01 for E-16-01.

Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.

Motion by Mr. Morris. Second by Mr. Gaechter

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None

Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to approve Bassani Power Equipment LLC PO#13850 for DPW Files and Chain Loop and Bassani Power Equipment LLC PO#13939 for EMC generator in the amount of \$3,800, for a total of \$3,837.83.

Motion by Mr. Morris. Second by Mr. Gaechter.

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None  
Not Voting: Bassani

Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to approve Eye On Wireless PO#13922 for Case and Charger for new phone in the amount of \$84.97.

Motion by Mr. Morris. Second by Mayor Bassani.

Ayes: Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None  
Not Voting: Gaechter

## REPORTS

Clerk Report – Ms. Millikin provided to Mayor Bassani his 3 year appointment to the municipal committee certificate.

Administrator Report – Ms. Millikin advised that the December 2, 2016 Tree Lighting was well attended, and she thanked Recreation Secretary Arlene De La Osa for all her efforts, as well as the Recreation Commission, Sussex Fire Department members who put up the lights, the Sussex Wantage school district, and Wantage Fire Department.

Ms. Millikin advised that Aaron Richardson no longer works for Wantage DPW, a FT laborer position has opened and Ms. Millikin asked for a resolution to approve the the full time hiring of Dana Welch, who is currently a part time DPW employee, to the Department of Public Works at a rate of \$15 per hour, effective December 12, 2016..

Motion by Mr. Morris. Second by Mr. Gaechter.

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None

Ms. Milikin spoke with Larry Fink regarding the DEP Grant monies and indicated that the township has until December 31, 2017 to acquire parcels under Open Space. \$550,000 is available. Ms. Millikin had meetings with Harold Pellow regarding end of year report – engineering projects, Larry Bono and Justin VanderGroof regarding the fire department equipment, and Kristy Tuper regarding Woodbourne Park. Ms. Millikin and CFO Michelle LaStarza are working on the budget. Ms. Millikin asked for a date for the bills meeting, and after discussion, the members of the committee determined that the meeting would be held at 9 AM on Decmeber 29, 2016. Ms. Millikin advised that the building would be closing at 1 PM for the employee Christmas party, to be held at the Green Olive restaurant. She added that the municipal building will be closed December 24, 25, 26, 2016, and January 2, 2017. Reorganization meeting is January 5, 2017 at 7 PM.

Attorney Report – Mr. Kienz thanked Ms. Millikin for attending a meeting with various attorneys at his office, adding that Mayor Bassani was also in attendance.

Committeeman Report – Mr. Morris wished all a Merry Christmas, and added that he is very happy with Ms. Millikin.

Committeeman Report – Mr. Gaechter inquired about the Open Space purchases, and Mr. Bassani added that there was a delay due to health issues in the Wargacki family. Mr. Bassani further added that a second appraisal has been acquired and will be submitted to Green Acres. Mr. Bassani hopes to wrap up that purchase in the first quarter of 2017, and start a second parcel purchase starting in early 2017, and would like to reach out to landowners who may be interested in selling their Wantage parcels of 30 acres or more. Mr. Gaechter advised that drivers are not stopping at the Sherman Ridge Road and Berry Road Stop sign, where, due a long term road closure waiting on bridge repair, there is an L in the road, instead of a T. Mr. Morris added that a similar situation is occurring on Armstrong and Berry Roads, due to the same road closure. It was discussed that drivers will be confused once the road is reopened and that appropriate signage should be used to prevent that. It was discussed that the house/barn

could be removed. Mr. Gaechter feels that a curve in road sign should replace the Stop sign. Mr. Morris feels that this may dissuade drivers from making a full stop, once the road is reopened. Mr. Gaechter further questioned if the township purchased that property, would there be a need to have the bridge replaced. Mayor Bassani asked, given that purchase, would the house/barn on the property need to be refurbished. Mayor Bassani felt that the barn was salvageable, but the house should not become a property where the township is a landlord, and perhaps would be better removed. Further discussion will ensue.

Mayor Reports – Mayor Bassani wished all a Merry Christmas, and added that the Tree Lighting was well attended.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS – Mayor Bassani advised that although the new Property Maintenance ordinance was mostly meant to enforce repairs to (mostly) bank owned properties, the township has acquired \$6,500 fees mandated in the ordinance over the first two months. Mayor Bassani recalled that a Viet Nam veteran had approached the committee after the flag had been lowered at the passing of township clerk/administrator Jim Doherty, asking if the flag would be lowered for him, a veteran, when he passed. Mayor Bassani continued that only the president of the governor may order the flag flown at half mast, but there was no penalty for having had done this for Jim Doherty. It was discussed that the Wantage Township flag would be lowered in respect to Wantage leaders and heros of our community..

Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to approve a resolution regarding the lowering of the Wantage Township flag to recognize those Wantage decedents deserving of the honor.

Motion by Mr. Morris. Second by Mr. Gaechter.

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None              Absent: None              Abstain: None

A Motion is in order to approve on fianl reading Ordinance #2016-11 AN ORDINANCE APPROPRIATING THE SUM OF \$6,450.00 FOR THE PURCHASE OF SERVER.

Motion by Mr. Morris, Second by Mr. Gaechter.

Mayor Bassani opened the meeting to the any member of the public who cared to comment on Ordinance #2016-11. Hearing none, Mayor Bassani requested a vote.

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None

OPEN PUBLIC SESSION

Ann Smulewicz is not a fan of the flag lowering resolution, she feels that there will be times when some people will feel slighted. She is strongly in favor of lowering the flag for veterans, but feels that “others” is arbitrary and that some people could be overlooked.

Larry Bono advises that the new fire truck is in service. He adds that working with Ms. Millikin has been wonderful.

John Nuss welcomes Ms. Millikin to Wantage. Mr. Nuss feels it would be appropriate to place the names of those decedents for whom the flag is lowered on the front board. Mr. Nuss asks, in regard to the Maintenance Ordinance, if real estate agents are responsible for the fees. Mayor Bassani asked Mr. Nuss to put his question in writing so that the attorney may respond. Mr. Kienz asked Mr. Nuss to provide the request to Ms. Von Oesen

who would then forward it to Mr. Kienz. Mr. Nuss also feels that commercial structures should be included in the maintenance ordinance. Mr. Nuss feels that the fees in the maintenance ordinance are too high and that the banks will push these costs onto the buyers. Mayor Bassani responded that the higher fees promote action. Mr. Nuss asked if snow birds who leave for warmer climates for 5 to 6 months out of the year would be affected by the ordinance, and Mr. Kienz advised that that would not initiate maintenance ordinance activity. Mr. Nuss asked if in 2017, something could be done to abate the odors emanating from the RER facility, and added that they were approved with the stipulation that the smells were to be confined to the facility.

Kathy Gorman spoke regarding the Recreation Committee. She would like to see Lake Neepaulin upkeep and maintenance needs met. Ms. Gorman stated that the Franklin Sussex Auto Mall cars are parked in such a way at the Ames shopping center as to pose a hazard should there be a fire, especially considering that there is a restaurant in the center. She feels that fire trucks may not be able to reach a fire with the cars parked as they are. There was discussion regarding amount of cars allowed to be parked there. Mayor Bassani requested that Pat Stefanelli and Larry Bono investigate same.

Jake Little of the Sussex Fire Department advised that he had received the Mutual Aid contract, and would like to know where he can go with questions. Mayor Bassani responded that he should ask administration.

Joe Retz advised that dumptrucks are dumping North Caldwell soil at Deckertown Union Cemetery, and he warns that anything could be in that dirt. He noted that a letter from an associated engineer did not allay his concerns. Mayor Bassani debated whether further information was necessary. Mr. Retz responded that contaminated fill recently had to be removed from Vernon Township. Mr. Retz also advised that other towns, including North Caldwell, have ordinances regarding fill. Ms. Millikin had reached out to the engineering company. Mayor Bassani advised that information may be in their response. Regarding RER, Mr. Retz stated that that company is bringing in great quantities of product, and it is out of control. Mr. Retz feels that the Committee does not have a handle of all the activity going on in Wantage.

Ann Smulewicz had met with John Hatzelis, of the Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority. Mr. Hatzelis had advised that SCMUA does accept soil originating in Sussex County, but does not receive soil from outside of Sussex County. Regarding Lake Windsor, Ms. Smulewicz advised that Mr. Maggio had sued 10 individuals, and, except for 2 trespassing issues, the Maggio case was dismissed. Ms. Smulewicz commended Ms. Von Oesen on the work she has done in the office of the clerk.

Kathy Gorman asked about the progress on the ShopRite store. Mayor Bassani responded that it was still in discussion.

John Nuss feels that Wantage needs an Ad Hoc environmental committee. Mayor Bassani said the DEP would be helpful when needed, in lieu of an ad hoc committee, as would the County Board of Health. Mr. Nuss does not feel that RER is a legitimate operation, and Mayor Bassani disagreed. Mayor Bassani asked, besides the smell, what is RER doing wrong?

Joe Retz stated that RER must comply with 132 conditions, and they are not meeting them.

EXECUTIVE SESSION - Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to close the Public Portion of the meeting and then assemble in Executive Session to conduct discussion regarding personnel and contract negotiations.

Motion by Mr. Morris. Second by Mr. Gaechter

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani

Nays: None

Absent: None

Abstain: None

Attorney Keinz read an explanatory statement specific to Executive Session.

Mayor Bassani closed Executive Session.

Mayor Bassani requested a Motion to open the meeting after closing Executive Session.

Motion by Mr. Morris, Seond by Mr. Gaechter

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None

Mr. Millikin read a resolution authorizing licensure between the Township of Wantage and Mr. Joe Hayes specific to his purchase of Lot 18 Block 57 and the location of the well on that property, which, being in the township right of way, is hereby allowed to remain.

Mayor Bassani requested a motion to approve the above resolution.

Motion by Mr. Morris, Second by Mr. Gaechter.

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None

Attorney Kienz advised that other items discussed in Executive Session were not ready to be released to the public.

Mayor Bassani asked for a Motion to close the meeting.

Motion by Mr. Gaechter, Seond by Mr. Morris.

Ayes: Gaechter, Morris, Bassani                      Nays: None                      Absent: None                      Abstain: None

Respectfully Submitted,

Christine M. Von Oesen  
Deputy Clerk